

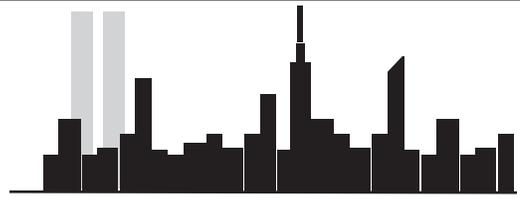
MAY 2008

**VIEW**  
P O I N T



**metro Tech**

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT



# WINNING TEAM

## FDNY EMS Team Wins First Place at Annual JEMS Competition

Members of the FDNY EMS Command once again proved why they are known as the City's Best, winning the Annual Journal of Emergency Medical Services (JEMS) Competition in Baltimore, Maryland, in March.

EMS Lieutenant James Fallar, Paramedic Joe Hudak and EMT Joe Fortis (and the team's alternate, Paramedic Don Faeth) beat 25 teams from across the country and Canada to win first prize in the annual competition, which is known to many as one of the world's most challenging.

"We are recognized among the best in the EMS community," said Lt. Fallar, team captain. "It was a great showing for us and I was proud to be part of it."

After earning a perfect score in the preliminaries, they were chosen as one of five teams that would compete in the finals on March 28.

The scenario for the finals was the aftermath of an earthquake in an urban area, resulting in a structural collapse that trapped 10 people.

"We only had one minute to size up the scene," said Paramedic Hudak. "As we

*(Continued on page 12)*



*(L to R) Lt. James Fallar, EMT Joe Fortis and Paramedic Joe Hudak win the annual JEMS competition in Maryland.*



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*FDNY Rescue Paramedics Marco Girao (third from left) and Juan Henriquez (fourth from right) were cited by the New York Daily News as Heroes of the Month in April for saving the lives of two trapped victims after the tragic crane collapse in Manhattan. Read more about their heroic rescue on page 3.*

## Queens Dispatch Pilot Success Prompts Citywide Expansion

Response times in Queens have dropped an average of 30 seconds for structural fires since we started a new pilot program more than two months ago – impressive results that have prompted an expansion of the program citywide.

It's a simple change in the way we do business – and it's made a dramatic impact that will better protect the public and firefighters.

The change involves sending units as soon as we know the nature of the emergency and the location (including confirmation of the address). Once those two critical pieces of information are obtained, it gets forwarded to the appropriate unit(s) for response. When any additional information becomes available, either from the initial caller or subsequent callers, it gets relayed via apparatus radio.

For the past several years we have been focusing on how to improve response times, with the effort concentrating on turn-out time and travel time. We have seen improvements throughout the city, with overall successive decreases in the last two years. This has been done, in part, through data analysis that provides citywide, borough, division, battalion and individual unit stats and is reviewed at all levels of command. The improvements indicate we have had a concerted and concentrated effort to do better, and I applaud everyone for their efforts.

With the focus recently turning to dispatch time – which is the time from initial call to receipt of alarm in quarters – we sought to improve upon the more than 1-minute average time it takes to process calls and notify units to respond. The pilot program has guided dispatchers and helped them focus on getting the necessary information — quickly and accurately – and immediately initiating the appropriate response.

For the first 72 days of the new Queens dispatch pilot program (Feb. 12-April 26), dispatch time for structural fires has averaged 48 seconds, compared to 1:15 for the same period of 2007, or 27 seconds faster this year compared to last year.

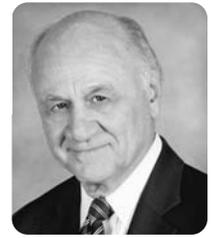
Response time for structural fires in Queens during the pilot has averaged 4:29 compared to 4:59 for the same period of 2007 – or 30 seconds faster this year compared to last year.

The results are impressive – and we've started to train dispatchers in other boroughs to fully expand the program. Training will take place in all boroughs over the next month before the program is fully implemented citywide effective June 1.

This is an incredible achievement for the Department – and I want to thank everyone involved, from the dispatchers to the firefighters and officers who have done a terrific job by improving the already stellar service you give to the people of this city.

\* \* \* \*

In an interview with the *Chief-Leader* newspaper last week, I was quoted saying I didn't understand why the unions weren't joining with the Department in praising the work of our dispatchers and this new policy, which has proven to help our firefighters respond to emergencies more quickly. We met with the unions and explained the program in detail. Additionally, we answered questions raised by the UFA regarding their inaccurate statements regarding several incidents. We explained in detail there was absolutely no truth to their claims. We even played them the dispatch tapes of specific incidents to prove there was no connection between the pilot program and their erroneous statements. One claim that was most troublesome involved the allegation that a firefighter was injured because an incorrect address was given to units. This is simply not true. Two different callers gave the same address for a fire when they saw/smelled smoke, and no additional information was provided by them or anyone else. Dispatchers did not get a "wrong" address – they got the best information available from those callers. When units arrived at the location, they quickly ascertained the fire was actually around the corner and they responded. Regardless of the Queens pilot, this would have been the case.



Commissioner's  
Message

*Richard Bragg*

# True Heroes

## *FDNY Rescue Medics Saved Two People from Crane Collapse*

Two FDNY rescue paramedics were hailed as heroes for saving the lives of two men trapped in the rubble of the crane collapse on March 15 and were honored as New York Daily News Heroes of the Month on April 9.

“It was an extraordinary rescue,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “Looking at the scene it is impossible to believe anyone survived. The danger was enormous and it was a very courageous act.”

When specially-trained Paramedics Marco Girao and Juan Henriquez arrived on the scene, firefighters and police told them there were two victims trapped under the rubble at 305 East 50 Street. Paramedics Girao and Henriquez said they then split up, each tending to a victim.

“I was worried we wouldn’t be able to get to them in time,” said Paramedic Girao.

Paramedic Girao rushed to the aid of a male who was buried in debris up to his waist. He was awake and talking, so Paramedic Girao was able to assess his condition as they dug him out brick by brick.

In less than an hour, he said they were able to free the man and transport him to the hospital.

Paramedic Henriquez’s patient also was conscious and talking, but he was buried face-down under about 30 feet of debris.

“We dug a hole and I saw his neck, back and about five fingers,” Paramedic Henriquez said.

He applied an IV to the victim’s jugular vein, but the paramedic still worried about crush syndrome, so he contacted FDNY Dr. Dario Gonzalez to determine a good course of action.

After several painstaking hours, firefighters freed him from the rubble and he was transported to the hospital in stable condition.

“You walk away saying ‘I can’t believe he’s in such good shape,’” said Dr. Gonzalez.

The medics said they hope to visit the



*(Top) (L to R) Rescue Paramedics Juan Henriquez and Marco Girao and FDNY Dr. Dario Gonzalez on March 17 tell the media about the providing life-saving medical care to two civilians from the crane collapse.*



*(Right) Firefighters help paramedics carry one of the crane collapse victims to an awaiting ambulance.*

patients in the hospital soon, but for now, they are just trying to process everything that happened.

“You train for this, but nothing compares to the real thing,” said Paramedic Henriquez. “You stop thinking and just focus on what you’re doing.”

Paramedic Girao added: “We were just a small representation of the group there that day, all of whom put their lives at risk. We felt safe because of the firefighters, police officers and others who were there with us.”

# Meeting of Kings

## *TSA Explosives Detection Canine Named to Honor Firefighter Killed on 9/11*

Firefighters at Engine 33/Ladder 9 met the newest member of the FDNY family on April 23, when a Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Explosives Detection Canine named King visited the firehouse.

The dog is named in honor of Firefighter Robert C. King, Jr., of Engine 33, who was killed on September 11, 2001.

“We are so proud,” said Audrey King, Firefighter King’s mother. “This is a wonderful legacy for us to cherish.”

Robert Hyde, proprietor of the canine program for the TSA, said the 20-month old black Labrador Retriever was the star of his training class.

“He’s really good at what he does,” he said.

The TSA has been using explosive detection canines for decades and Mr. Hyde said they have recently begun naming the dogs in honor of fallen heroes: “to bring us pride and give us strength.”

During the ceremony Firefighters Bobby Schmuck and Mike Ottrando from Engine 33 presented King’s handler, Inspector Nathan Chase, with an FDNY badge, as well as a smaller version for the dog to wear.

Another badge was given to Firefighter King’s family.

Firefighter King, 36, was remembered as a skilled handyman who built several tables that are still used at the firehouse.

He also was remembered as a skilled and dedicated firefighter with nine years on the job. “He was always the first to arrive and the last to leave,” said Firefighter Schmuck.

Firefighter Ottrando added, “He always seemed to be at the center of everything.



*A new TSA Explosives Detection Canine was named King in honor of Firefighter Robert C. King of Engine 33 who was killed on September 11. The dog will be stationed at Kennedy Airport.*

## Honoring the Smartest

### *FDNY High School Students Awarded for Academic Achievement*



Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta joined the FDNY Foundation and Principal James Anderson on April 2 to present awards to 13 FDNY High School students, recognizing their exceptional academic achievement.

Twelve of the students received laptops and one received a digital camera for their achievements.

“I know from personal experience that it is difficult to grow up without access to the kinds of tools and amenities that other people take for granted- the kinds of things that make achieving success much easier,” said Commissioner Scoppetta. “But in the end, your hard-earned success will not just be a success for each of you personally. It will be a success for your families, your communities and for the FDNY.”

## Head of the Class

### *FDNY Program Selected for 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards Competition*

The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School announced on April 15, the FDNY's Officers Management Institute (FOMI) is one of the top 50 Programs of the 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards Competition.

"Our people from top to bottom are the best in the country at responding to emergencies and doing things that fire departments traditionally do," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "On the other hand, today we need much more than that. They have to concern themselves with new initiatives, understand the budgeting process, what it takes to obtain the resources for new initiatives and set the pri-

orities that need to be set. FOMI is part and parcel of a whole review of how the Department is managed."

The Innovations in American Government Awards Program is designed to improve government practice by honoring effective government initiatives and encouraging the dissemination of such best practices across the country.

The FDNY program was selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 applications from across the country that represent the best government programs at the local, county, city, tribal, state and federal levels.

Established in 2002, FOMI provides fire and EMS chiefs with a customized curriculum of leadership and management train-

ing, which includes presentations by experts from the corporate community, government and homeland security.

As part of the course, chiefs created projects to enhance Department policy and strategy.

FOMI is a six-month program offered through Columbia University's Picker Center for Executive Education. It is funded by the FDNY Foundation and is taught at Jack Welch Executive Training Center in Crotonville, NY.

Since its inception, the program has catalyzed the FDNY's rapid enhancement of operational and technological capabilities to meet the complex challenges of a post-9/11 world.

## Heart of the Bravest

### *Firefighter Goes on Humanitarian Trip to Ghana*

Firefighter Kevin Duggan of Engine 263 has found his calling.

He traveled to Takoradi, Ghana, in March to help children in an orphanage, just months after returning from a humanitarian mission in Ecuador.

"It's better than any vacation I've ever been on," he said just hours after returning from the African nation. "It gave me a different view of the world."

During the 10-day trip, Firefighter Duggan said he and a group of 23 students and chaperones from West Connecticut University helped children at a local orphanage (he was invited on the trip by one of the chaperones whom he met on his trip to Ecuador).

They poured a cement floor and painted a new 30 x 32 foot building with an aluminum ceiling and no windows that the Navy erected for the orphanage to use as a school.

He said no one in the group was skilled at construction, but they were creative with their execution of the project. For example, they used water bottles to serve as levels and drains.

The group also interacted with the children, teaching them English and taking them on trips to the ocean.



*Firefighter Kevin Duggan of Engine 263 stands in front of a market in Ghana during his humanitarian trip to the country.*

He said one of his most memorable experiences from the trip came while on a jog at the beach. In a fisherman's village he encountered a group of children who had never seen a man with his fair complexion. They followed him as he ran, mimicking his every move.

"It was such an amazing experience," he said.

He added that everyone he met was extremely welcoming and kind. They could not stop thanking him and wanted to talk about American life and politics.

"The people were so friendly," Firefighter Duggan said of the African nation. "They really had a sense about being one with the world."

After this and his medical mission trip to Guayaquil, Ecuador, with Healing the Children last fall, Firefighter Duggan said he is hooked on humanitarian work and is already planning his next adventure.

"I'm going to try to put together a mission trip – maybe one with a group of firefighters," he said. "It's in my blood now."

## Remembering a Hero

### FDNY Honors Paramedic Deborah Reeve in Plaque Dedication Ceremony

EMS officers, paramedics and EMTs honored Paramedic Deborah Reeve on March 11 during an emotional plaque dedication ceremony at EMS Station 20 in the Bronx.

Paramedic Reeve died of mesothelioma (lung cancer) on March 15, 2006.

“This loss was a great blow to the members of this EMS station, the Department and the City of New York,” said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. “But we hope this ceremony will serve as a reminder to her family that we understand your pain has not diminished and your loss has not been forgotten.”

Paramedic Reeve served with the EMS Command for 17 years before her death. She was remembered as smart, hard working and an outstanding paramedic.

“She was the strongest person I ever met,” said Reeve’s husband, Paramedic David Reeve, also of Station 20.

He recalled how they met at the EMS Training Academy, when she sat behind him in class and made fun of his southern accent.

He was joined at the ceremony by their children, Elizabeth, 12, and Mark, 8.

“All new members should try to model



*Paramedic David Reeve and his children Elizabeth and Mark attend the unveiling of a plaque honoring Paramedic Debbie Reeve, who died of lung cancer in 2006.*

themselves after Debbie – the commitment and dedication she showed every day,” said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano.

Chief of EMS John Peruggia read the poem “She is Gone” in Paramedic Reeve’s memory, saying it emphasized “the importance of remembering Debbie, who gave so much to this city.”

The plaque was unveiled to cheers and tears from her family, friends and fellow EMS personnel. It will be hung at EMS Station 20, located at Jacobi Medical Center in the Morris Park/Pelham Parkway section of the Bronx.

“She was an excellent, outstanding paramedic ... she really knew her stuff,” said Captain Felipe Periu of Station 20.



**Day of Remembrance** -- On March 25, 1911, firefighters responded to what would become one of the most notorious, deadly fires in New York City history, the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire. Members of the Fire Department joined city officials, union leaders and garment industry employees to honor the 97th anniversary of the tragic blaze on March 20 in Manhattan. During the ceremony, Ladder 20 symbolically raised its ladder to the 6th floor of the building, which still sits on the corner of Washington Place and Greene Street, and a bell was tolled to commemorate each of the 146 workers who died that day. Local students read aloud the names of those lost in the tragedy and laid carnations in their honor. Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, First Deputy Commissioner Frank Cruthers, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally also read the names of the four FDNY members who died in the line of duty in 2007.

# Grand Gala

**FDNY Foundation Hosts Annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner, Raises \$1.64 Million**



The FDNY Foundation's annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner on March 13. (L to R) FDNY Foundation Vice Chair Andrew Guarino, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, Honoree Mort Zuckerman, Awards Emcee Erin Burnett of CNBC, Honoree Martin Sullivan, Chairman of the FDNY Foundation Steve Ruzzo, Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano and Chief of Operations Patrick McNally.

It was a night to honor the Department's most generous patrons.

The FDNY Foundation honored President and CEO of American International Group (AIG) Martin Sullivan and Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of *U.S. News and World Report* and Publisher of the *New York Daily News* Mort Zuckerman at the annual Fire Commissioner's Humanitarian Awards Dinner on March 13, and raised a record \$1.64 million for the nonprofit organization.

"The FDNY Foundation has been working year round to earn funds that go directly to public safety initiatives," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta during the event at the New York Hilton. "They are contributing in a very tangible way to the safety of all New York's citizens."

Presented annually, the Humanitarian Awards recognize individuals for outstanding and continuing service to the New York City community.

Mr. Sullivan has a personal and professional dedication to the FDNY Foundation, including helping fund the development of the Fire Department's electronic command boards and supporting the FDNY Fire Zone's educational programs.

After visiting the quarters of Engine 4/Ladder 15, Mr. Sullivan said that he noticed the company's 9/11 memorial did

not include contributions from his hometown's fire brigade, the London Fire Service. So during the Awards he presented Commissioner Scoppetta with a firefighter's helmet, uniform dress cap and certificates from the London Fire Service and Metropolitan Police for Engine 4/Ladder 15.

"[FDNY members] are true professionals," said Mr. Sullivan. "We are reminded tonight that we have true public servants in our midst who are willing to risk their lives for the public's safety."

Mr. Zuckerman has helped promote the FDNY's fire safety message by donating valuable advertising space for the Foundation's fire safety campaigns in *U.S. News & World Report* and the *New York Daily News*. He also has helped champion the outstanding work of the Department's brave members by regularly featuring fire and EMS personnel in the *Daily News*' "Hero of the Month" column.

"I feel honored, yet awkward, accepting this award, for the people who really deserve to be honored are all of you, who go out every day and protect this city and provide safety for the residents of this City," Mr. Zuckerman said.

Receiving this year's Commissioner's Service Recognition Award was the FDNY's Office of Recruitment and Diver-

sity, including Director Michele Maglione and Captain Hector Tyler.

The FDNY High School for Fire and Life Safety received the Commissioner Thomas Von Essen Fire Safety Education Award. Mr. Von Essen announced at the ceremony that next year the award will be renamed the Chief William Feehan Award for Excellence in Schools, honoring the late chief's commitment to education.

"You represent the best of the City and have been pillars of support for the FDNY," said Chairman of the FDNY Foundation Steve Ruzow.

Established in 1981, the FDNY Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that supports the life-saving work of FDNY members through various initiatives and sponsors a variety of educational and public awareness programs designed to reduce the number of fires and fire fatalities.

In the last year, the Foundation has launched the largest fire safety campaign in FDNY history; donated more than 150,000 smoke alarm batteries to the FDNY for the largest battery giveaway in City history; partnered with Leary Firefighters Foundation to fund new High-Rise Simulator at the FDNY Fire Academy; and given nearly 9,000 fire safety presentations given under the Fire Zone on the Road program.

## Firefighters Rescue Four from Fire in Brooklyn

Firefighters from Ladder 112 and Engine 277 saved three children and their grandmother from a fire in Bushwick, Brooklyn on March 21.

“You get lots of butterflies in your stomach,” said Firefighter Rory Allen of Ladder 112. “It’s what every firefighter lives for, saving someone’s life.”

At 3:39 p.m. firefighters received a call for a fire at 539 Central Avenue for a fire in the stairwell.

Upon arrival they found heavy fire conditions on the second floor of the private dwelling.

Firefighter Mark Loftus of Ladder 112 noticed civilians trapped on the third floor, unable to escape through the interior due to the fire and smoke.

Lt. Niels Jorgensen of Ladder 112 said



(Above left) Firefighters from Engine 277/Ladder 112 (L to R) FF Milton Mendez, FF Manny Torres, FF Rory Allen, FF Benny Ortiz, Lt. Niels Jorgensen, FF Mike Ashby, FF Mark Loftus, FF Anthony Chaimowitz, FF Anthony Kennedy, FF Chris McKeon, FF Mike Nugent, FF Tom Boyce (detailed from Squad 252)



(Above right) Units operate at the fire on Central Avenue where three children and their grandmother were rescued through a third floor window. Photo courtesy of Joseph Epstein, FDNY Dispatcher

the company immediately moved their aerial ladder into position and Firefighter Allen began reaching for the children.

Although the window guard hindered their removal, Firefighter Allen was able to grab all three children and pass them to Firefighter Loftus – a boy, 4, and two girls, 2 and 6 months.

At one point, Firefighter Loftus said he had all three children in his arms.

The two firefighters as well as Firefighter Tom Boyce, who was detailed from Squad 252, carried all four victims to safety.

They were transported by EMS to Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in stable condition. The fire was deemed under control at 4:08 p.m.

“These guys did a great job – everybody gets to go home,” said Firefighter Boyce.

## A Great Big Thank You

### FDNY Hosts Students from South Carolina Who Raised Funds for New Apparatus After 9/11

Chief of Department Salvatore J. Casano joined fire officers and firefighters from Engine 202 and Ladder 101 in Brooklyn on April 29 to greet students from South Carolina who helped raise funds to purchase a new ladder truck for the fire company after September 11, 2001.

Firefighters shared stories and laughs with 150 students, teachers and parents from Lexington, South Carolina, who spearheaded the remarkable fundraising campaign that raised more than \$500,000 in the weeks after the terrorist attacks.

The funds, which were donated in November 2001, were used to purchase a new ladder truck for Ladder Company 101, whose rig was destroyed on 9/11.

Students from the White Knoll High School Marching Band toured the quarters of Engine 202 and Ladder 101 and sang for New York’s Bravest. Many of the students were attending White Knoll Middle School when they donated the funds,



Firefighters from Engine 202 and Ladder 101 join students from South Carolina who helped raise funds to purchase a new ladder truck for the company following the attacks of 9/11. Photo courtesy of Butch Moran.

but never saw the new rig.

To show their appreciation, firefighters provided lunch for the students, school staffers and parents – and even dropped by CBS’ Early Show in midtown Manhattan to thank the teens again for their generosity.

The students also visited firefighters at Engine 10 and Ladder 10 and got an opportunity to see Ground Zero and the World Trade Center Tribute Center on Liberty Street.

## Firefighter Rescues Two in Early Morning Fire



Firefighter Michael Tompkins of Ladder 39 (center) saved two people from an early house fire in the Bronx. He is joined by Firefighter Travis Boroden (left) and Lt. Tomas Batis.

Firefighter Michael Tompkins of Ladder 39 is being hailed as a hero for rescuing two people – a father and his 9-month-old baby boy – from a 3-alarm fire in the Bronx on April 17.

The fire was first reported at 1:42 a.m. at 4057 Lowerre Place in the Williamsbridge neighborhood.

Upon arrival, firefighters said they saw heavy fire coming from the first floor windows.

Firefighter Tompkins and the other firefighters rushed to the rear of the residence, where they found two people had already jumped from third floor windows due to the extreme heat and heavy smoke. Another trapped victim, a man, dangling a baby from a third-floor window.

“He kept saying ‘I’m going to drop the baby and jump,’ and I kept telling him not to do anything,” said Firefighter Tompkins.

After climbing a concrete barrier and ripping out a fence, the firefighters rushed to the yard below his window. They had to maneuver around construction debris in

the yard and electrical wires overhead as they rushed to extend their 24-foot ladder.

“Ten more seconds and he was going to jump,” Firefighter Tompkins said.

He said as he stepped onto the top rung of the ladder, the father threw the infant and he caught him by the back of his neck.

As he carried the baby to safety, the man then jumped down to the top of the ladder and Firefighter Tompkins helped him to safety.

The firefighters then climbed into the top floor of the home to search for more victims.

“I have kids of my own, so I definitely didn’t want anyone to drop the baby,” said Firefighter Tompkins, who is father to three girls, ages 5, 7 and 10.

The fire was placed under control at 2:39 a.m. Five civilians and eight firefighters were transported to Jacobi Medical Center with minor injuries. The cause of the fire is under investigation by the Bureau of Fire Investigations.

## Fire Marshals Catch Seven Teens in Connection with School Fire

FDNY Fire Marshals Richard Grigoli and Carmine Jichetti from the Citywide South Command investigated a fire at JHS 88, Peter Rouget School in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and arrested seven teens in connection with the April 16 blaze.

Fire marshals said the teens – who were all 13 to 14 years-old – hid in the school after the dismissal time of 5:15 p.m.

At that time they went into the school cafeteria and placed a book and papers in the microwave and turned the oven on. They then left the area, but placed papers in the door to block the locks so they could reenter the room later.

When they returned at around 6:20 p.m., realizing their plan failed, they pushed more papers into the microwave and turned it on for an extended period of time. The papers ignited, catching the oven, a table and a bulletin board on fire.

A school custodian saw the smoke and called the FDNY at 6:27 p.m. Firefighters placed the fire under control by 6:44 p.m.

School personnel recognized one of the students leaving the area that evening and alerted the fire marshals.

Six of the students were arrested and charged with arson in the fourth degree and criminal trespassing. The seventh student also was charged with trespassing.

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# Happy Day

## 30 Promoted to Chief, Lieutenant and Fire Marshal

Firefighters from throughout the five boroughs and their families gathered at the Fire Academy on Randall's Island to celebrate the promotion of two deputy assistant chiefs, one battalion chief, 15 lieutenants and 12 fire marshals on March 26.

"All of you had to work extremely hard to get to this point," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta. "You have earned the right to be called leaders in this Department."

Among the promoted members was the new Queens Borough Commander, Deputy Chief John Sudnik of Division 3, who has 23 years on the job. During his tenure, he has served as Fire Chiefs Association President and attended post-graduate courses at the U.S. Naval Academy in California.

Also promoted was Deputy Chief Edward Baggott of Division 13, who during his 26 years on the job has earned the title of role model by numerous field mem-

bers.

"It's obvious you have the skill and dedication to do the job," said Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano. "Handle each assignment with the dedication and commitment it deserves."

Also among the promoted members was Fire Marshal Aisha Ricca, who is following in the footsteps of her husband, Fire Marshal Pat Ricca.

She joined the Department as an EMT before becoming a firefighter in 2000. She now joins her husband, Pat, as a fire marshal.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge of the new position," she said. "[The FDNY]



Two deputy assistant chiefs, one battalion chief, 15 lieutenants and 12 fire marshals were promoted during a ceremony on Randall's Island.

is the only place where I can have three careers in one."

Combined, the promoted members bring more than 400 years of experience to their new positions.

## Shining Stars

### Paramedics and EMTs Graduate from Academy

Seventy eight standout paramedics and EMTs graduated from the EMS Academy on March 13 to a standing ovation.

"You are about to embark upon the most exciting and challenging period of your careers," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta during the ceremony at LaGuardia Community College. "You are joining a great group of men and women who not only work hard, but are great at what they do."

The 12 paramedics and 66 EMTs were commended for already saving lives on the job. During ambulance rotations, they saved two cardiac arrest victims and delivered a baby.

And they all come from diverse backgrounds, speaking more than 16 languages, including Albanian, Arabic, Creole, French, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Lao, Portuguese, Punjabi,



Seventy-eight paramedics and EMTs graduated during a ceremony at LaGuardia Community College.

Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and Thai.

"The Department is proud of your accomplishments," Chief of Department Salvatore Cassano said. "We look forward to seeing you in the field."

Two are following in their family members' footsteps by joining the FDNY. EMT Linda Ubiles' father, EMT James Ubiles, works out of Battalion 32 and EMT Tristan Tricarico's father is Captain

Anthony Tricarico of Squad 252.

"We're the best EMS Command on the planet and it will stay that way because all of you are joining us today," said Chief of EMS John Peruggia. "Thank you for joining our team."

Seven of the graduates are veterans of the armed forces, including three who served in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and/or Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq.

Paramedic Robert Persaud, an eight year Navy veteran, was deployed in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and will be deployed again this spring. Paramedic Allen Schildgen, the class valedictorian, is a retired Navy veteran with 20 years of service.

EMT Alexander Bustamante also was named valedictorian.

# A Look Back in FDNY History

By Kaitlin Munisteri

## Times Square Rope Rescue

One of the most unbelievable fire rescues ever caught on film took place high above the streets in Times Square on May 14, 1991.

Dispatch received a call for a fire on the top floor of a building at 737 Seventh Avenue at 48<sup>th</sup> Street.

Rescue 1 was the first due company and upon arrival immediately saw heavy smoke pouring from the top of the 12 story building with two men trapped on separate sides of the building.

Lieutenant Patrick Brown climbed onto the parapet to calm the two trapped victims as Firefighter Kevin Shea lowered Firefighter Patrick Barr (detailed to Rescue 1 from Ladder 45) down the side of the building. Since he had no where to tie off the rope, Firefighter Shea took turns of the rope and sat with his feet braced against the parapet as Rescue 1 Firefighters Bruce Newbery and Patrick O'Keefe held him down.

The gathering crowd below watched as Firefighter Barr was lowered to the 12<sup>th</sup> floor and successfully grabbed the first victim. The pair was then lowered to the 11<sup>th</sup> floor where members of Ladder 35 and Ladder 21 pulled them through the window.

As soon as the rescue was complete, Firefighter Shea prepared to be lowered to rescue the second victim using the same rope. This time Firefighter Robert McCormick controlled the rope with Firefighters Newbery and O'Keefe again assisting.

The second rescue was just as successful, and as firefighters quickly pulled them through the window to his safety, the crowd cheered.

After rescuing the victims, firefighters continued to battle the fire, which had reached a third alarm.

Firefighters Shea and Barr received medals for their heroic actions that day.

## Gas Explosion in the Bronx

At 3:49 p.m. on April 8, 1987, a gas explosion occurred that ripped through a grocery store at 2634 Third Avenue in the Bronx. The store was shaken by the explosion and flattened soon after as the vacant three-story building next door fell on top of it.

Six people were instantly killed by the collapse and 29 others were injured. Two men also were trapped in the cellar beneath the eight feet of dust and debris.

Upon arrival, firefighters rushed into the building, including Lieutenant Paul J. McFadden and Firefighters Nicholas Giordano, John Norman, Robert Greene and Harry Christensen of Rescue 3.

The firefighters tunneled, shored, cut and lifted debris for six hours, despite the danger of a secondary collapse, and rescued the victims.

The firefighters received medals for their dangerous work that day.



## FDNY EMS Team Wins First Place at Annual JEMS Competition

(Continued from page 1)

entered we heard an explosion, saw smoke and heard hammers banging – indicating they were in the process of rescuing trapped victims.”

The team was given 20 minutes to perform a triage in the chaotic scene, as panicked ‘patients’ continued to arrive. They were judged on their communication skills and their accuracy in treatment as more than 300 spectators watched.

And although they all said they were

overwhelmed by the challenge, they finished in first place.

“The judges told us ‘you guys are untouchable, you’re flawless,’” said EMT Fortis. “It’s pretty honorable that the FDNY is thought of as one of the elite agencies in the world.”

The team’s alternate, Paramedic Faeth added, “They all did a great job. This win is a great morale boost for the membership and brings pride to the personnel. It definitely gives positive recognition for

the quality training and people we have [working for the FDNY EMS Command].”

As winners of the competition, the EMS members received state-of-the-art medical equipment and a \$1,000 check, which they said they will donate to FDNY EMT Christopher Pierce, who was seriously injured in a vehicle accident on Long Island while off duty in February.

“We didn’t decide to [donate the check] for the pictures or the politics, I would just want someone to do the same for my family if something were to happen to me,” said EMT Fortis.

Yet although this team has an excellent track record at the JEMS competition – they won first place in 2006 and second place in 2007 – this will most likely be the last year they will compete at JEMS.

“We’ve won gold silver gold, so we’ll be retiring from JEMS,” said Lt. Fallar. “In the emergency medical community, the FDNY is number one. It has been great, but it’s time to step aside.”

### CHARITIES WINNERS OF FDNY-NYPD COMPETITIONS



**Worthy causes:** (Top) The FDNY Lacrosse Team played the NYPD team in the Lead the Way Lacrosse Day of Champions on April 19 at Manhasset High School. Although the FDNY lost the game (final score 13-10), they raised \$3,000 for the Lead the Way Fund, which raises money to support families of U.S. Army Rangers who have died, have been disabled or who currently are serving in harm’s way around the world. (Bottom) The Bravest Hockey Team played the Finest on April 6 at Nassau Coliseum. The Fire Department team was bested 7-5 by the NYPD team, but both were winners for supporting various FD and PD charities.



## VIEW POINT

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT

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**FDNY**  
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**A 144 YEAR HISTORY**  
**OF COMMITMENT, COURAGE & COMPASSION**